



Presented October 1, 2012

## **Town Council Report: September, 2012 Parks and Recreation Activity Highlights:**

### ***Park 5-Year Master Plan Process***

- The Town Council Stakeholder input meeting was completed with vigorous, positive discussion on park matters, Thank you for your efforts.
- Other key stakeholders have been invited to four other meetings during the week of the Council Meeting.
- First General Public Input meeting scheduled Thursday Oct 25 at 6:00 PM, Town Hall's Community Room.
- Online survey is anticipated to continue through stakeholder meetings so that these meetings can serve as another "reminder point for people to get the survey completed. Currently response is in the 100's.

### ***Zionsville Parks Golf Course***

- In September 2012, our gross operating profit was ~ \$28,749. As fully expected, this is less than the August 2012 gross operating profit of ~\$45,4675. With schools starting and the weather starting to change, the months after July usually start to trend downward a bit. However this past September's numbers are right in the ball park with previous years. The three previous years' September numbers were ~\$22,964 (2011, which was generally lower for most months); ~\$27,192 (2010); and ~\$30,269 (2009). So this past month ran right in between the two "normal" of those previous years (2010 and 2009).
- We have gotten recent indications from our local media, that seems to indicate they will be doing a story about the golf course. From indications of whom they interviewed it may be a piece about the financial success of the course perhaps combined with some in depth interviews they took with some of our many great staff out there. We are eager to see what actually appears in the press.

### ***Events/Activities in the Parks***

- Zionsville Youth Football League (ZYFL) is nearing completion on their fall leagues at from Mulberry Fields Park. This group comprises about 300-400 kids (including the cheerleading program) and of course the additional spectators. This was both weekend and (six) weekday night play. The Park Board is exploring the potential of a multi-year contract with ZYFL for the Fall seasons and possibly with Zionsville Sports Alliance for the Spring seasons at Mulberry Fields.
- Similarly, the Zionsville Boys and Girls Club is finishing up their flag football out at Mulberry Fields Park in the upcoming weeks. They run their several hundred participants and spectators on nearly the same schedule as ZYFL at Mulberry Fields for several Saturday's through the fall.
- Additionally, Zionsville Youth Football League (ZYFL) cooperated with the Park Department (at the Park Board's/Department's request) in the first ever Zionsville hosting of the NFL's Punt Pass & Kick contest. Zionsville served as essentially a "regional host" whose winners in each age/gender range move on to Shelbyville to compete at the next level. We provided the facility and some staff assistance and they provided free advertising to their constituents and much of the volunteers for the day. In order to not overload anyone this first year, the outside advertising comprised of the mention on the "NFL's PP&K" official Indiana Website. Given that, attendance at this first event went very well. Nearly 50 youth of all ages came (including a registrant from Illinois). These youth were matched by at least that many spectators. It is the hope that we can combine with ZYFL to offer this again next year.
- The Park's Department's Zion Nature Center continued it's programming tradition with numerous offerings. One of the yearly success stories is the Creek Stomp at Creekside Park. For the last couple of years, this program has involved cooperation with Gavin Merriman of the Town's Street and Stormwater Department. Gavin has assisted the last couple of years to this fun and educational event put on by our Park

Interpretative Naturalist, Therese Burkhard. The kids love the chance to actually be encouraged to stomp up and down the streambed and we use that hook to educate them along the way.

- The Maplelawn Farms Movie Night in Mulberry Fields Park was again well attended this past Friday night. An estimated 45-50 children and parents were in attendance to the showing of Oklahoma. The Park Board leases the operation of this small corner of Mulberry Fields Park to the Maplelawn nonprofit group. This group would not have a home or a focus without that and the Park Board would not have access to this wonderful, low-cost (at least in taxpayer's dollars) programming partnership.
- I was asked to present to a joint kick-off meeting of about 100 cub scouts and their parents & den leaders. We received several complements from the adults on the program and the park system in general.
- Under the heading of upcoming programming occurring in our parks, one of our Nature Center's more popular approaching programs Bat Encounters, is again being held this year; Oct 11th at 6:30 pm. This program is popular enough that we have it in the Town Hall's Community room.
- Also under the heading of upcoming park-system related events, on the morning of October 6th, the Optimists Club's Annual Hit the Brick Fundraiser run walk will be utilizing significant portions of the rail trail to comprise a majority of some of their routing. This will bring several 100 users to our system.
- Also the morning of October 6th, Zionsville Parks and Recreation will be working with the Central Indiana Bike Association (CIBA) to host one of their weekend rides out of Mulberry Fields Park. Over the past several years, CIBA only typically has two CIBA sponsored weekend rides a season that go through parts of Zionsville. However this year one of the rides had a rest stop at Mulberry Fields. I was there at Mulberry Fields observing weekend usage and had a 30-45 minute conversation with the Ride Leaders. It became clear that they liked the park so well that they wanted to host a third Zionsville Ride, this one starting and finishing in our park. Since Zionsville citizens have a strong bicycling contingent, we expect this to be well attended (if the weather cooperates, anyway).
- And if there wasn't enough to do in the Zionsville Parks on October 6th, the St Vincent's Walk of Hope. will be holding their annual fundraiser walk of 3 and 15 miles in support of the combat against cancer. This is at least the 4th or 5th year for this event, but we are told they specifically wanted to move from Carmel to here, in part because of our lovely park system. Their route stops and finishes in Lions Parks but their routing utilize the much of the Rail Trail, the pathway through Turkey Foot park, and other trails in Town. Additionally the reportedly several 1000 participants, will be utilizing an additional five of our parks as rest stops along their routes.

### *Other Highlighted Matters*

- The Park Department's Lions Club Fall Festival booth was very well visited during the two day's the Park Board and staff manned the site. We utilized this as a way to educate the public on the park system in general and also specifically mentioned the 5-year planning process. We received numerous positive comments about the system in general and our various park development and programming efforts. According to Board members the most commonly asked question was when will the newest park come on line (Heritage Trail Park).
- Members of the Town's Pathway Committee, Park Board and Park Staff members and other citizens toured the Friends of Boone County's trail section from Lebanon to Thorntown. This is surfaced with a material that is similar in size to the granular material used in the southern portion of the rail trail. Unfortunately along this 7 miles of trail to our north, there were several exhibited several areas where the surface was either breaking up or never solidified enough in the first place. It is probably likely that unless the grant inspections from the DNR are lenient in ways they normally have not been in the past, these areas won't be passed as suitable for ADA access (which is a requirement for the Farm Heritage group). If this is the case, the group will have to spend time and money correcting these. It maybe that there are some application techniques that might help this when a project was built, but if not; any installer (us, potentially, for example) could be liable if such surfacing similarly failed in future applications.